

PFH DISTRICT RSL NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2018

The events, meetings, and services I have attended in the last month are as follows:

1. On Wednesday 7 March, I gave a talk to the Royal Flying Doctors Auxiliary in Rockhampton on the RSL.
2. On Saturday 10 March, I travelled to Bundaberg to attend the Wide Bay and Burnett District AGM.
3. I travelled to Sarina:
 - To attend and chair the PFH District AGM on Saturday 17 March and the PFH Annual Dinner on that evening.
 - To attend the AGM of the Sarina Sub-Branch on Sunday 18 March.
4. I travelled to Brisbane to:
 - Meet with the Auditor of Mates4Mates on Tuesday 20 March regarding the 2017 audit of the financial statements.
 - Participate in a State Board Strategic Planning session on Wednesday 21 March.
 - Attend the March Board meeting on Thursday 22 March.
5. I travelled to Mackay to attend a Marian Sub-Branch General meeting on Sunday 25 March and present an RSL Life Membership Award to Sub-Branch member, Fred Soper.

District President's Voluntary Hours and Kilometres Travelled Statistics for March 2018

Voluntary Hours	199.0 hours
Kilometers Travelled	3257 kilometers
Nights Away From Home	10

Life Membership – Fred Soper

As mentioned earlier, I had the honor and privilege of attending the Marian Sub-Branch AGM on Sunday 25 March and presenting Sub-Branch member, Fred Soper, with Life Membership of the League.

Fred has given long and dedicated service to the RSL over many years as a member of the Marian Sub-Branch and served in Sub-Branch Executive positions. Fred also had a distinguished career in the sugar industry in Mackay.



I am sure you will all join with me in congratulating Fred for receiving this prestigious RSL National Award.

District President's Award

At the Annual Dinner held at Sarina on 17 March, it was announced that the Springsure Sub-Branch had won the inaugural award for 2017.

Unfortunately, the Sub-Branch was not represented at the Annual Dinner and the award could not be presented on the night. I will be attending the AGM of the Springsure Sub-Branch on Saturday 21 April and I will present the award on this occasion.

I know you will join with me in congratulating President, Adrian Wallen, and the Sub-Branch members on winning this district award.



District Council Meetings

The next Council meeting will be held on Saturday 19 May at Moranbah.

District Executive Meetings

The next District Executive meeting will be held on Saturday 28 April.

2018 District AGM and Annual Dinner



The District AGM was held at Sarina Sub-Branch and was followed by the District Annual Dinner.

I would like to thank The State President, Stewart Cameron CSC, and State Vice President, Ewan Cameron, for giving their time to be our guests on the occasion.

The business of the AGM was successfully processed and the Annual Dinner was enjoyed by all. I would like to thank our District Secretary, Lyn, for the work she put into the planning and operation to ensure the running of the AGM and Annual Dinner went smoothly.



Further, I also thank President, Ron Gurnett, and the members of the Sarina Sub-Branch for hosting the event and making us all feel so welcome.

State Board Meeting 22 March 2018

ACNC Investigation

A communication went to sub-branches in late February 2017 advising that the ACNC was conducting an investigation into all RSL State Branches including Queensland.

RSL Queensland welcomed the investigation and voluntarily supplied the information requested by the ACNC.

The ACNC has indicated that they would like to see changes made to the Governance of RSL QLD, particularly the Board structure.

In November 2017, the State Board approved and submitted a Governance Improvement Plan document to the ACNC for their approval and the plan was accepted. In fact they have said that it is the best plan they had seen.

Representatives from the ACNC visited RSL QLD and met with the Board during the March Board meeting. They have again made it clear that they are looking for progress towards a skilled based board and they will be very disappointed if the members do not approve such in the new constitution that will be considered at the AGM in Cairns in June this year.

In recent days, the ACNC finalized the investigation and RSL Queensland has now received the formal outcome of the year- long investigation. The ACNC has identified some breaches of its obligations under the ACNC Legislation in RSL Queensland's governance and has issued a Directions Notice. The Directions Notice compels RSL Queensland to undertake specific actions within a set period, otherwise the failure to comply with the direction is an offence and may result in further regulatory action including the loss of charitable status.

RSL Queensland has accepted all the directions issued by the ACNC and the Board has unanimously committed to implementing our Governance Plan and agreeing to independent, third party assurance of governance processes over the next 12 months.

An online copy of the Summary of Direction Notice is available at www.rslqld.org/governance

Deloitte's Governance Study

As you are aware, the State RSL Board engaged Deloitte's in June 2017 to conduct a study into governance in RSL Queensland.

Deloitte's representatives travelled throughout Queensland and made presentations to each of the 10 Districts and sought member views and feedback on what changes they were contemplating.

Deloitte's presented their final report recommendations to the State Board at the December 2017 meeting. The report was posted on the RSL State website and was sent electronically to each sub-branch in the districts before Christmas.

The State President, Stewart Cameron CSC, and the Chair of the Constitution and Awards Committee, Roy Cunneen, are carrying out a round of district consultations and have presented a hybrid board structure version to the membership for feedback and comment. This presentation was made to the PFH District AGM in Sarina on 17 March 2018.

The outcome of this matter is very important as it relates directly to the ACNC Direction Notice issued in recent days and it is an integral part of the Governance Improvement Plan the Board of RSL QLD is committed to. The new skills based board structure when finalized will be incorporated into the new constitution which will be presented to the membership at the next AGM in Cairns in June of this year.

It is my belief that the change to a skilled based board is in the best interests of RSL QLD and the League in general. I urge sub-branches to seriously consider voting for the new constitution as this will allow RSL QLD to proceed into the 2nd centenary of our existence with a state of the art governance system that meets the modern day standards of the ACNC.

The ATO Private Binding Ruling

The ATO has now responded to RSL QLD's application for a Private Binding Ruling and has determined that the historic out of pocket expenses paid to volunteer RSL QLD directors should be treated as income for taxation purposes. RSL QLD is still liaising with the ATO in terms of the next steps, but it is likely that retrospective PAYG statements will be issued to the directors of RSL QLD.

This ruling has huge implications for how these out of pocket expenses are treated at district and sub-branch level and an advice will be issued to districts and sub-branches in due course.

Transition to Employment Program

One of the major issues current veterans are faced with during their transition from the Defence Force is finding a job.

RSL Queensland launched a pilot program in Townsville on 25 September 2017 for a six month period with the view to extending the program throughout Queensland.

There are presently over 100 ex-service personnel participating in the pilot program and to date this initiative has been well received.

Nasho's CC Sub-Branch Name Change

At the last District Council meeting in February, the Sub- Branch sought approval of RSL Queensland to change its name to the "Rockhampton Combined Services" sub-branch. The District supported the name change.

The request has been sent to the State Constitution & Awards Committee and the committee will make a recommendation to the Board at the April Board meeting.

Gracemere Sub-Branch Motion

The Gracemere Sub-Branch presented the following motion:

“That RSL National be requested to lobby the Federal Government for Remembrance Day to be gazette as a national Public Holiday”.

at the last District Council meeting and the District Council supported the motion.

The motion was presented to the March Board meeting but was not accepted.

Extra Funding to Districts

State Branch has allocated an extra \$25,000 worth of grant funds to our District. The guidelines for the allocation of these funds will need to be drawn up and in due course we will advise details to the sub-branches.

State AGM in Cairns 22/24 June 2018

At the AGM in Townsville in June 2016, a motion was put and passed which required RSL State to allocate \$2million to sub-branches each year for welfare spending. Legal advice has been received that this motion was invalid.

A motion will be put to the members in Cairns to rescind this motion and I ask that you give due consideration to supporting this motion.

This motion commits RSL Queensland to allocate these funds in perpetuity regardless of the financial position and this is not prudent management for the organization. RSL Queensland currently allocates \$1million to welfare funding by providing \$100,000 to each district.

On Going Matters and Reminders

District Website/Facebook

Website address is www.rslpfhdistrict.org.au

Sub-branches are encouraged to keep providing details of events, photographs, etc to Vice President, Phil Luzzi, or District Secretary, Lynette Ney, for placing on the district website and facebook page.

Centenary of Armistice Dinner

The District is to run the dinner in Mackay on the evening of Friday 9 November 2018 to commemorate this historic event.

District Deputy President, John Edwards, is chairing a sub-committee which is planning and organizing the event.

Innovation Networks Committee

State Branch has set up the abovementioned committee and the District nominees on the committee are:

Warren Shearer – Farleigh & Northern Beaches Sub-Branch

Rob Murray – Marian Sub-Branch

The Committee was due to meet in Brisbane in recent weeks.

Tony Cook Video

The District Executive decided at the last District Executive meeting to provide sponsorship of \$2,000 towards the production of the video.

Tony Cook is a country and western singer and a young veteran who is now living in the Emu Park area. He has written a song about his time in the service of his country and PTSD. The Livingstone Shire Council has also provided sponsorship and gave Tony permission to use the Emu Park Centenary of ANZAC Memorial as backdrop for his video.

The District will receive acknowledgement and publicity from the sponsorship. Tony will also provide a copy of his song and video for putting on the District website.

The song and video is now on the District website.

District Strategic Plan

The District Plan is in the process of being reviewed.

Sub-Branch Board Governance

Following on from the Governance Training provided by the District Secretary at the District Council meeting in Clermont in September 2017, I will continue to remind sub-branches that members of sub-branch boards need to familiarize themselves with the TOBI booklet and undertake the on-line learning program so they understand what their responsibilities and duties are as a member of a Not-For-profit Board.

In terms of the TOBI Booklet, sub-branch boards should also ensure that board members have a written appointment which sets out these responsibilities and duties and acknowledges that board members are aware of the sub-branch's Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest policies.

Further, sub-branch board members should be aware that board members can be held liable for the debts of the organization if they allow the sub-branch to trade while insolvent.

It is recommended that at each meeting of a sub-branch, board members should rigorously review the financial position and once this happens pass the following motion:

“That in the opinion of the Board/Management Committee(whichever is appropriate) the sub-branch is solvent and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the sub-branch will be able to pay its debts when they become due and payable”.

Dental Health Pilot Program

The program has now been up and running since May 2017 and the District Council has resolved to continue the pilot program into 2018.

During 2018, the District Executive will review the program. Given the success of the program to date, I can see no reason why the program would not become a permanent one.

So far in 2018, 11 members have availed of the program at a cost of \$2525.

LiveLife Alarms Program

The program is now permanent and is proving very popular with our members in need.

So far in 2018, 3 alarms have been issued at a cost of \$1185.

Sub-branch presidents are reminded to keep an eye out for members who would benefit from the program.

District PAWS Coordinator

In September 2017, Phil Luzzi was appointed to the position of District PAWS Coordinator. In the latter part of 2017, he has been undertaking training in relation to the position.

Phil is now contacting sub-branches on how he can help with their welfare and pension services.

Phil is in the process of organizing for a basic welfare course to be run in the north and south of the district and sub-branch presidents are asked to encourage members to attend such a course so they can provide welfare services within their sub-branch.

Donations to Mates4Mates

Sub-branches are encouraged to consider donating funds to Mates4Mates if they are in a position to do so.

District Secretary, Lynette, has the relevant paper work that needs to be completed and sent with your donation to Mates4Mates.

Cadet Fund 2018

RSL State has increased the amount provided to the District from \$24,000 to \$33,750.

The Executive has decided to bring forward the date of allocation of the funds from November to Council meeting on 15 September 2018. Applications closing date will be 10th August with the District Executive vetting the applications on 25 August 2018.

Sub-branches need to start liaising with the cadet groups in their areas to establish what their needs are.

ANZAC Centenary Commemorative Funding

Funding is still available until the end of 2018 to commemorate anniversaries of historical World War 1 events.

The District Secretary has a copy of the Terms of Reference and Guidelines for the funding program.

Applications are to be submitted using the "Event Plan" as a guide (located on RSL(Queensland Branch) website). Submissions are to be submitted through District so the completeness of the application can be checked.

Sub-branches need to be aware that funds will not be allocated to a single sub-branch unless there are geographic isolation reasons. Events need to be community based and in most cases sub-branches in a local area will need to combine and apply for the funding.

District Veterans Welfare Fund

A further \$100,000 of funds will be allocated to the District for 2018.

Sub-branches need to start thinking about the welfare projects they will be applying for to benefit their members and should get the applications in early.

In ending, I would like to again emphasize how important the next AGM in Cairns will be to the future of the RSL in Queensland, particularly in regard to changing RSL QLD's board structure to a skills basis. I ask sub-branch presidents to engage their membership at a general meeting and rigorously highlight the benefits of such a change. Please give me a call if you want to discuss the matter further or you need further information.

Stay safe and continue the good work of the League.

Kindest regards

Barry Vains OAM

District President

THE LAST POST

Member ID	First Name	Surname	Date of Birth	Deceased D:	Owner	Last Financi
2430310	Noel	Barker	4/04/1945	27/03/2018	Yeppoon Sub Branch	SMLIFE
1017070	Josephine	Hammond	23/05/1930	14/03/2018	Mackay Sub Branch	SM2003
1001596	John	Breadsell	6/03/1934	24/02/2018	Seaforth Sub Branch	SMLIFE
1020625	Douglas	Keeton	23/02/1942	17/02/2018	Farleigh & Northern	SMLIFE
1555021	Grace	Conaghan	22/10/1921	15/02/2018	Yeppoon Sub Branch	SMLIFE
1518751	Harold	Stevens	11/06/1920	10/02/2018	Mackay Sub Branch	SMLIFE

MEMBERSHIPS

Members yet to renew since 2017 By District and Sub Branch		
Pioneer-Fitzroy-Highlands District		53
	Capricornia & Rockhampton Region Sub Branch Inc	5
	Clermont Sub Branch Inc.	3
	Emerald Sub Branch Inc.	2
	Emu Park Sub Branch Inc.	9
	Farleigh & Northern Beaches Sub Branch	1
	Gemfields Sub Branch Inc.	10
	Kuttabul Sub Branch Inc	1
	Mackay Sub Branch Inc.	4
	Sarina Sub Branch Inc.	3
	Walkerston-Pleystowe Sub Branch Inc.	2
Yeppoon Sub Branch Inc.	13	
Grand Total		53